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The Excellency of Charity.

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SERMON
Preach'd to the
CLERGY
OF THE

Arch-Deaconry of **CHESTER**,
June 3d. 1712.

At their Yearly Meating at
WARRINGTON,

For the Relief of the Widows and Children of poor Clergy-men within that Arch-Deaconry.

Publish'd at their Request. J. L.

By **JOHN COWPER, M.A.** Vicar of *Midlewich*, and sometime Fellow of *Braze-Nose-College* in **OXFORD.**

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1875

The Excellency of Charity

MON

Presented to the

LEGGY

OF THE

Diocesan of Chester

June 21. 1712.

At their Yearly Meeting at

MARRINGTON



Witnessed by the

In Witness whereof, M.A. Vicar of
Marrington, and I, the undersigned Fellow of
the same, have hereunto set our hands and seals
at Marrington, this 21st day of June, 1712.

Witnessed by the
M.A. Vicar of Marrington, and I, the undersigned Fellow of
the same, have hereunto set our hands and seals
at Marrington, this 21st day of June, 1712.

TO THE
Reverend and Learned
CLERGY

OF THE
Arch-Deaconry of *Chester,*

This **SERMON** is, with great Respect,
Dedicated by their

Most Obedient,

Humble Servant,

JOHN COWPER.

TO THE
Reverend and Learned
CLERGY

OF THE
Arch-Bishopric of Okeham

Sermon is with the Bishop
Dedicated by him

JOHN COWPER

London: Printed

JOHN COWPER

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The Excellency of Charity, &c.

JOB XXIX. Vers. 12 13.

*Because I delivered the poor that
cried, and the fatherless, and him
that had none to help him; the
blessing of him that was ready to
perish came upon me, and I caused
the Widows heart to sing for joy.*

THESB Words are part of a just
Vindication of the innocent and
righteous *Job*, from the severe
and unworthy Reflections, and indeed
impudent Detraction of a seeming Friend,
that is, of the most cruel of Enemies.

Eliphaz saw *Job* in the lowest Abyſs of
Miſery; the Arrows of the Almighty
were within him, and the Poyſon thereof
had drunk up his Spirits; the Terrors of
the Lord ſat themſelves on every ſide in
array againſt him, and Calamities assaulted

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him

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him, as many ways as 'twas possible for human Nature to be come at. Such a miserable Life as his was, could undoubtedly have very little ease in it self: But when those that pretended to be Comforters in his Afflictions, encreased 'em, and instead of pouring Oyl into his Wounds, made fresh Ruptures, and in a kind of spiritual Pride (the worst of Insolencies) by false Accusations and merciless Charges, did tear and afflict his pious Soul (as if they endeavour'd to render that conformable to the Pressures and Miseries of his Body) He that with such an undaunted holy Magnanimity, and a Patience so Eminent as to grow into a Proverb, could sustain his Infirmary; yet, when he is touch'd in the most tender Part; when he is unreasonably upbraided with Hard-heartedness, want of Charity, and the most impious and unnatural of Oppressions, those of the Widow and the Fatherless, he thinks it high Time to vindicate himself from those Aspersions, which if not removed, would not only take from him the Title and Appellation of Good, but divest him also of all Claim, even to common Humanity.

If we look backwards as far the 22^d. Chapter, we shall find this false Friend bring-

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Bringing in such a long Catalogue and Charge of Crimes against him, as his Malice indeed could heap up, but the most execrable Villain scarcely practice : He seems studiously to have amassed together all the vile imputations his exulcerated Soul could imagine to fix upon him ; to present him with cruel Satyr, instead of healing Advice.

I shall not enter upon the Examination of the others, but as to the particulars which concern us in the 9th Verse, he tells him, *Thou hast sent Widows away empty, and the arms of the Fatherless have been broken.* How deep must it pierce into any Soul (that hath not quite renounced all humanity) to have such a heavy Accusation brought against it ? It had been an unmerciful Act to have sent any poor Person away empty ; but to send away the Widow, the Forlorn and Supportless, deserted as to all conjugal Happinesses, deprived of all Estate, and such an Indigent, who ought to be the whole World's Care, aggravates the Crime, and from *Uncharitable*, raises it up to *Unnatural*. Again, as to the other part of the Verse, to have brought Calamities upon any one, would have been an high piece of Injustice ; but to have *broken the Arms* that were held up in the way of

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humble

humble Petition, and of the Fatherless to whom all Persons owed that Protection in *Charity*, which as Orphans they were deprived of in *Nature*, carries in it such extreme Barbarity that can hardly be practised by Men under signally odious Habits of Sin: And *Job*, a Person every way extraordinary (but especially in Piety) was so tender to endure any thing that should in the least reflect upon him the breach of his Duty towards God or Man, that not out of any Vanity selflove, or over esteem of any Excellencies in himself, but out of a deep Sense of the most mischievous Consequences of Calumny unanswer'd in such a Case, and the Necessity of vindicating himself from so opprobrious, so dismal, and yet so false an Accusation; he breaks out into this modest Justification of his *Charity*, *Because I delivered the poor that cried, the fatherless, and him that had none to help him, the blessing of him that was ready to perish came upon me, and I caused the Widow's heart to sing for joy.*

In which words, this eminent Person as he vindicates himself from all hardheartedness, want of Commiseration and bowels of Compassion towards the Miserable; so he holds forth to the World a Lecture of Charity and Benevolence

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volence, to be shown to all those which any way stand in need of, but to some especially, who cannot subsist without it; and upon many good Reasons, are the fittest and most deserving Objects of our Pity, and Pious Liberality.

The words therefore in which this patient Sufferer justifies himself, will derive upon us the Spirit of God, speaking in him those blessed Effects mentioned in the Text, if we will but secure to our selves the assistance of the Cause: He was *Charitable*, and therefore *Blessed*; what was his Practice, must be our Rule; and then we need not doubt of the happy Consequences.

We are, Reverend Brethren, met here this Day upon a Glorious Account, to contribute towards the Necessities of the most pitiable, most by the word of God recommended Objects of Charity and Compassion, the Widows, and the Fatherless; Terms which in themselves highly enforce this Noble Duty upon us. Surely to refresh the Bowels of such, to give Ease and Comfort to our own; to shew Compassion to these, is an happy means of taking pity on our selves; great its present Reward, and its future will be much more so.

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'Tis an Unexceptionable Charity, from which a true Blessing is to be expected, and nothing but a Religious Seasonable Relief, can *make him that is ready to perish*, break out into grateful Thanksgivings, or cause the Mournful Widow to change her sad Note, into joyful Benedictions, and sudden unusual Exultations; the Text then declares to us the performances of some things, the Omision of which, a Righteous Innocent Person was Charged with, and therefore takes all possible Care to remove from himself that dire Imputation, which must needs exhibit and render him an Enemy to God and Man; which will more evidently appear, if we will Consider,

First, That Charity, is a Duty incumbent upon all, to all Men.

Secondly, That Alms-giving, as a Branch of it, is necessarily to be practised.

And *Thirdly*, That to some Objects and by some Persons more than others.

Fourthly, That the Happy Consequences of it may be very cogent and sufficient Motives to the Duty.

First then, That Charity, is a Duty incumbent upon *all*, to *all* Men; and here I must profess my self not a little Sorry and Concern'd, that amongst Christians, especial

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especially (whom the very Heathens Noted and Extolled for their singular Charity, and a *Julian* could so far allow, as in that Case to propose 'em for imitation) the disuétude of the Practice should render it liable to be proved.

Certainly that Universal Kindness and Benevolence, that good Nature and Promptitude to be beneficial, that *φιλανθρωπία* and placing in our own kind the objects of Benefaction, that most significantly stiled *Humanity*, which we meet with in Authors, and expect to receive from Men, is something more than a bare word, and Nominal Notion: It is (without all Controversie) a Duty rooted in our Nature, and I am obliged to be kind and merciful, meerly as I am a Man.

Methinks if there were nothing else for Argument, but that common Original, Nature, and Blood, by which all Mankind is cemented together by a close Union, an Union which ought never to be dissolved; it were enough to convince some ill-natur'd Philosophers, that Man is not naturally to his Kind a Lyon, a Bear, or a Serpent; that his first breath denounces War, and that all his consequent Actions are only in subserviency to the carrying of it on. What is the *Crime and Corruption* of Man; they call his
Nature,

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Nature, and bring him into the World, a Curse to himself, and to his Stock, distorted and warp'd aside by a most prevailing domineering obliquity.

But we must not read the Grand Designs of Creation and Providence in such unsuitable Characters. No surely! Original Goodness would never have set the Glory of his Workmanship out of his Hands so rough and unpolished. He certainly Created Man in his own Image, whatever impious Notions have since deformed him into that of the Devils.

The Almighty Wisdom made Man, as much as his Nature would permit, communicative, and as he made of one blood all Nations of Men; so upon that very Basis he built him up a Sociable Obliging Creature, which was bound to extend his Charity as far as he was related, which was to the Ends of the World.

Let us then look up to the Rock whence we are hewn, and to the Hole of the Pit whence we are digged, Isa. 51. 1. That is, let us remember, that Men, being all of one great Family, having one common Parent, rooted in one common Nature, and designed to one great sure End, are under the strongest Inducements to Love as Brethren. We may say with the Children of *Jacob*, *We*

are

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are all one Man's Sons, and in respect of our Creatour, as 'tis in the 22d of Proverbs, and the 2d Verse, the Rich and Poor meet together, the Lord is the Maker of them all; so that they are all, naturali Conditione pares, in the Mortality of their Bodies, and the Immortality of their Souls, there's naturally no difference; and where there is no distinction in Nature, there ought to be a Conjunction in Affection; and therefore whatever Circumstances supervene ab Extra, to depress our fellow Creature, they are, as much as lies in us, to be repaired, and he to be Pitied, and Relieved.

Have we not all one Father? Hath not one God Created us? as the Prophet expostulates, Mal. 2. 10. Why do we deal Treacherously every Man against his Brother? As we have therefore Opportunity, as the Apostle Exhorts, Let us do good unto all Men, ever follow, as 'tis in another place, that which is good, both among your selves, and to all Men. And certainly our blessed Saviour would not have commanded us to love our Enemies, had he not intended that we ought to look upon all Mankind as Friends. Many other Authorities may be produced,

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ced, which either positively, or reductively will serve to Establish the assertion. The *Quid Juris* therefore of this Universal Charity, is founded upon the Laws of Nature, and those of God; to the observation of both which, as proceeding from a Supream, a paramount Power, there must necessarily be derived an immutable Obligation.

Having spoke thus much as to that Universal Charity which is due to all Men, I descend now to that Branch of it, which is call'd *Alms-giving*; or Liberality, which peculiarly respects our fellow Creature, as Poor, whom when we see by some unlucky Causes forced upon great Necessities, lost perhaps in his Estate, Hungry, and Cold, and possessing little of the World, unless it be the Miseries that are so frequent and so Tyrannical in it: We cast a Commiserating Eye upon his Evil Condition, and out of the Estate, which the Blessing of God hath conferr'd upon us, we contribute with a cheerful Heart and open Hand to the alleviating, if not to the removal of, his Afflictions, we supply his Wants, relieve his Indigencies, and endeavour, if we cannot totally extinguish, to make his Poverty tolerable.

Now

Now this Charity towards the Poor is founded in the Sense and Consideration of that common *Humanity* we have been discoursing of before : For when any Man reflects upon the Equality in Nature, which runs through all Mankind, and that we are all liable to the same vicissitudes of Fortune, which some private Persons to their extreme Misery experience ; and since St. *James* styles it a royal Law, by which we are enjoyn'd to love our Neighbour as our selves, and that which our blessed Saviour was pleas'd to honour by his Proposal of it to the World, *All things whatsoever ye would that men should do to you, do ye even so to them,* must necessarily be writ indelibly in every sober Heart ; the Consequence will be easie, that we cannot (without Contradiction to God himself, our Nature and Reason, the Law and the Prophets) refuse that Relief to others, which, if we were placed in the same miserable Circumstances, we should desire and expect. The Scriptures are so plentiful in recommending this Duty to us, that God's chief Design of bestowing Riches on some particular Persons, seems to be that they might employ 'em in the relief and charitable Administration to the Necessities of the Poor ; *Whosoever hath*

this worlds good, saith St. John, and sees his Brother hath need, and shutteth up his bowels of Compassion from him, how dwelleth the Love of God in him? 1 John, 17. He is pronounced a Rebel to the Will of God who retains his Riches when the Poor stand in need of Support, and want to subsist by his Liberality. Nay, he that hath pity on the Poor, lendeth to the Lord himself; God, who is All-sufficiency, and to whose glorious sublime Nature, 'tis impossible any want or indigency should justly be ascribed, condescends so far as to put what is laid out for the Poor upon his own Account. Blessed is the Man that confides in the sure Promise of so certain and bountiful a Paymaster.

Our Blessed Saviour when he shall come in his Glory, and all his holy Angels with him, then shall he sit on the Throne of his Glory (full of awful Majesty) to judge all Nations; in that great Day of Separation of the Saints from the Wicked he shall accept the one and reprobate the other, accordingly as they have relieved or neglected the Poor; For when he shall say to the one, *When I was an hungred you gave me Meat*, and to the other, *you gave me none* Mat. 25, 35, &c. and they conscious of themselves, the One of never having conferred any Kindness, and the Other of not

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ever having personally Affronted our Saviour, shall expostulate by interrogation, *Lord, when showed we any Acts of Charity, or performed any Services of Civility, or even of common Humanity towards Thee? Or on the other Hand, When saw we Thee an hungred, or a thirst, or a stranger, or naked, or sick, or in prison, and did not minister unto Thee?* The Lord's Answer will be short and quick, and on both sides surprising, *Inasmuch as you have done it to one of the least (that is meanest) of these my Brethren, you have done it unto Me.*

How should it then incite and inflame us to an ardent Zeal and Promptitude to contribute towards the Relieving of the Wants, and the Succouring our distressed Fellow-Creatures, when the Saviour of the World (God blessed for evermore) is pleased to honour 'em with the Appellation of Brethren, and shall enter whatsoever may be expended for their Benefit, as an Alms given to himself; whoever can pretend to believe this, and do the contrary, by his Practice confutes his Faith, is an Infidel in reality, tho' a Christian in profession; and dreadful will be the Reward which the Divine Justice will assign to such base Prevarication.

The Law of God himself, the inspir'd Prophets, the Heralds and Proclaimers of

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his Will, the holy Apostles, are very frequent and pathetic in their Exhortations to Charity. In *Levit. 25. 35.* 'tis expressly said, *If thy brother be waxen poor and fallen in decay with thee* (in the Original it is, if his Hand fails so that he cannot help himself, or otherwise if he extend his Hand for help or to receive an Alms) *then thou shalt receive him* (In the Hebrew 'tis *strengthen, support* him so that he may not irrecoverably fall) yea, tho' he be a Stranger or Sojourner, which tho' they are exempted from some other Privileges may justly claim a share in, and have a Right (if poor) to the Natives Charity. Many other Places out of the old Law might (if necessary) be cited to this purpose, as that in *Deuter. 15. 11.* *Thou shalt open thy hand wide unto thy Brother, to thy poor, and to thy needy in thy Land.* Indeed it cannot but be confessed that the *Jews* were very liberal and exemplary in this Point above all other Nations; and had it not been for the Sounding of the Trumpet, and the Ostentation and I know not what Merit they placed in this Duty, they might have had a better Reward, than popular Air, and the praise of Men.

Thus also the Evangelical Prophet when he declares to his People, what fall
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was acceptable to God, He says, *Is it not to deal thy bread to the Hungry, and that thou bring the poor that is cast out, Isa. 58. 7.* (Harbourless utterly destitute of any settled Habitation) *to thy house, when thou sees the poor, that thou cover him, and that thou hide not thy self from thy own flesh, Viz.* From him who is by Nature (if no way else) thy Brother; which Offices, tho' joined here with Fasting, are (as we have proved) necessary at all Times, and the Obligation to 'em is Eternal: *Dives* was in Torments, not for Oppressing or Spoiling, but for not *Relieving* and *Supporting Lazarus* in his Wants; If (as our Saviour assures us) *A Cup of cold Water,* (*Matth. 10. 42.*) given to one of his Disciples, shall by no means go unrewarded; surely God is not Unrighteous to forget this our Work and labour of Love; which Love we have shewn for his Name's sake, who have Minister'd unto the Necessities of the Saints, and yet do Minister.

It would be tedious to recite but half the Passages in holy Writ, which tend to Exhort us to the Practice of Religious Alms-giving; and in this Audience, it would also be superfluous, where so many are so very well versed in the Scriptures, and have devoted themselves to the
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Meditation of 'em, not only as their *Study* but their *Rule*. But this may be said, that in the Holy Scriptures, frequent Injunctions are promulged to enforce it upon us, many great Promises are proposed to endear us to it, and dismal Terrors are thunder'd out against those, which dare be so unnatural as to neglect it; by all which as they abundantly explain their meaning to us in this Case, so they render us the more inexcusable, if we can be so perverse, so cruel, and inhuman, as not to observe a Duty, which the Care of Heaven hath with so much concern inculcated to us.

I very well know that Casuists and moral Writers prescribe many Rules to us, *How our Charity is to be managed; Who are the fittest Donors; Of what Things the Alms must consist; How the Quantity must be proportioned; Who is a proper Object; After what manner we are to give; and Lastly, The Time when we ought to do it.* But I will not presume to teach those of whom I may learn. Only give me leave to say, That in great and urgent Necessities, 'tis so far from being any fault, that 'tis a Christian Glory, if the Erogation exceed the Estate, and then too, let us remember always, that our Charity must be perpetual, not consist
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in a transient Act, as if it were a thing to be done but once and no more; no! it must continue as long as we have any Faculties whereby we may relieve, or there are any indigent Persons on which we employ 'em.

And here I cannot but take Notice of the frugal Opinion of some, who have imagined that all Religion consists in Faith, and that if they could but believe in the Scriptural Truths (which 'twas easie to fancy they could) no matter for what we call the *Agenda* in Christianity, the *Credenda* are sufficient, and nothing else would be requir'd: This is (as to the Purse), truly a very saving Faith; but St. *James's* Authority in a few Words easily confutes these *Solifidians*, who says, Faith without Works is dead by it self, and as the Body without the Spirit is dead, so Faith without Works is dead also. There must be something of the Hand as well as of the Head; and Faith without Works can no more justify us before God, than a Corps can breath, or put it self into Motion, or readily exercise all the Actions of Vitality; *For by works a man is justified* (saith the Apostle) *and not by Faith.*

Upon which Account some on the other Hand ruffle it high with the pompous

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pous Terms of good Works, Merit, and Super-erogation, *But can a Man be profitable to God?* Job 22. 2. Does not the Creature owe all that is in his Power to the Crearour? And would he be thought to Merit, when he but endeavours to pay his Debts? And when our blessed Saviour says to his Disciples, *When you have done all these things which are commanded you, say we are unprofitable Servants, we have done that which was our duty to do,* Luk. 17. 10. Are the Words to be taken figuratively, or as spoken in Compliment to Almighty God? Or can any Man (not perfectly blinded with Interest) think they can confer any thing upon infinite Perfection? Such Positions might (if we had time) be proved to be attended by no small number of absurd Consequences, and let the proud Asserters manage their impertinent distinction of *de Condigno* and *de Congruo*, as Artificially as they can, yet they will never be able to evince, that the State of the Almighty may be better'd (which Merit must suppose, because it constantly makes an Addition to the Person from whom we merit) or that a few imperfect Actions upon Earth, can be of competent Value to purchase an Eternity in Heaven, and the Vision of God: But rather that their Divinity is
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sub-servient to their Politicks, and that such Doctrines were contrived to bring in the gainful Trade of Indulgencies, which the Popes Treasurers very well understand.

I proceed now to my Third Particular; which is, That Alms-giving is to be practised to *some Objects*, and by *some Persons* more than others.

First, I am necessarily more obliged to be Compassionate and Charitable to *some Persons*, more than others.

Nature indeed obliges me to be Charitable to all Men, since we are all derived from the same Root and Parent; but then if a certain part of this common Body, link themselves in a more close Communion (as for Instance sake) by a peculiar Profession of Faith (which God out of his great Mercy hath enlightned me to) I am a Christian, the Brotherhood of *Grace* is to take place of the Brotherhood of *Nature*. And I am rather to shew all Offices of Kindness and Benefaction, to him that is Related to me by the *Evangelical Law*, than to him who is only so upon the account of the *Moral*. Religion superinducing the greater Tye. Proximity of Blood, Habitation or Disposition, found an Obligation of being more favourable to my Kindred,

dred, my Neighbour, or my Friend, than to any others (not Universally speaking, but admitting of Equal Circumstances.)

I am certainly bound to be more kind to my Brother, than I am to him that Lives in *China*; to him with whom I daily converse, than to him that Digs in *America*; to him that lies in my Bosom, than to him who is both in Language and Manners a Stranger to me. But then there are some Indigent Persons which call for my Charity, before what I owe to my nearest Relations. I cannot now descend to Particulars, but the Scriptures have proposed the Care of the Fatherless, and Widow, so Eminently, that they are scarce upon any Subject more Copious, than in pouring out *Blessings* upon the Relievers, or more vehement in denouncing *Curses* upon the Regardless of such Persons in so sad a State of Dereliction.

Ye shall not afflict any Widow or Fatherless Child expressly, *Exod. 22. ver. 22*. He (*that is the God of Gods, and Lord of Lords, a Great, a Mighty, and Terrible God*) doth execute the Judgment, (viz. assumes to himself, and defends the Cause; or avenges the Injuries) of the *Fatherless; and the Widow*; and again

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Cursed be he that perverteth the Judgment of the Fatherless, and Widow; and so Isaiah, Judge (and do ye Justice in the Cause of) the Fatherless, and Plead for (viz. decide for) the Widow; and Jeremy, Oppress not the Stranger, the Fatherless, and the Widow.

Widowhood, and Orphanage, are undoubtedly the most dismal States, that Women or Children are capable of being under; but of all Widows, and all Children (too often God knows) those of the *English* Clergy are the most Miserable. Of which Truth, a bare Narration (without any Rhetorick to heighten it) will easily Convince us.

A Man (after an Estate perhaps almost spent in his Education at the University) is capable of and takes Orders, and (be his Merit what it will) after many Disappointments, and frustrated Hopes, at last (Heaven being propitious) He acquires a Competency, in a little time Marries; being Bred Gentilely, Lives so, and thinks more of laying up Treasures in Heaven, than encreasing his Estate upon Earth, gets nothing but Children, and as he has put a stop to his Hopes, so he doth not much involve himself in Cares. But then, if an unexpected Disease, or some other Accident,

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cident, carries him off, and he dies, can any Case be more Calamitous, than that of the Relict and her Children? In a little time she must leave (perhaps Hungry) the Place in which she hath so plentifully Lived; and her Off-spring must bid farewell to the House where in they first drew their Breath, when they are not certain of any other where in to hide their Heads: The Poor Widow hath only the Miserable Comfort of giving an Account of her Husband's good Nature, Studious Life, Kindness to her, and what might have happened if he had Lived; whilst she is at present in extream Want, her Children Crying for what by her cannot be purchased she accompanying them with her Tears because not able to supply their Indigencies. Those Bowels must be of Brass which cannot yearn, and that Face too which cannot Weep at so Lamentable an Object. Think those Persons who shall this Day contribute to, in such Condition, and then I leave it to yourselves to make the Application: But,

2dly, Ecclesiastical Persons ought to be above others, Charitable to the Poor and consequently to these more Pitiab Instances of Indigence (not only upon the account of the possibility of leaving behind

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behind 'em Objects of Compassion, but) upon Consideration, that they have devoted themselves to the observation of the Duties of Charity, and shewing Mercy: For then every Violation of such Duties, enlarges and widens the Scandal; a Flaw in a Diamond is easily discernable: The Duty of *Pastors* (from the Signification of the word) is to *feed*; those then that most want *food*, stand most in need of the *Pastoral Care*, and are most largely to be supply'd. The Minister at the Altar ought to bring a Liberal Hand to the Offering: If it is possible that any Person should be inclined to be backward in such a Case, let him Consider,

4^{thly}, That the Happy Consequences of Charity may be very Cogent, and sufficient Motives to the Duty; some of which, to avoid Prolixity, I shall only name.

The First is, That what we bestow in Charity, we lend to God; who never shuts up his Exchequer, but will with large Interest repay whatever may be said to be conferred on him.

Secondly, That Liberality to the Poor, is so far from Impoverishing us, that in this

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this World it commonly encreases our Estates.

Thirdly, That even our Posterity will be made Happy by it.

And, Fourthly, That (by God's Acceptance) it will at last Instate us in Heaven.

All which are the Sentiments of the Scriptures, and out of them might be easily and copiously proved. Indeed all Arguments upon this Occasion (were it not in submission to an Authoritative and Pious Command) may seem needless and superabundant in this Auditory, where every one so very well knows the Grounds, the Reasons of, and Motives to, and brings with him a Mind and Hand, so well experienced in, and habituated to Charity; yet I cannot omit one Incentive more, and that surely which will be very Encouraging; and it is the Example of our Right Reverend Diocesan.

He has already in a great measure, Inspired the Family of the Prophets, under his Charge, with his Heavenly Sentiments, and beloved Practice, and made the Body of the Clergy, (as much
as

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as was possible for Members to be) conformable to their Head; which Commands not with a Domineering Despotical Tyranny, but by sweet Influences, Rational Precepts, and Unanswerable Arguments, perswades Men into present Enjoyment, and Future Felicities; and Inculcates to us, that the surest way to be Happy, is to make others so.

Let us follow his Example, otherwise we shall be guilty of Blindness, and Error, within the activity of that Sphere of Light, which shines constantly, and without intermission, and is ever serenely pointing out Ways and Methods by which our most Holy Religion (in an Atheistical, Loose and Hypocritical Age, too much either despised or counterfeited) may be reduced to its Primitive Dignity, and Esteem. If therefore we are now Remiss, our Negligence will be Inexcusable, and our Guilt will be aggravated by our Privilege. May he long, long enjoy the Prayers of the Widow, and the Fatherless; and *may not any one of us be weary of well-doing!* Let us never suffer the *ways of Sion to mourn*, never shut our Ears against the Cries of the Poor Relict, and her deserted, distressed Children; and then we may be sure, that Heaven will hear those many Prayers,

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Prayers, and good Wishes, they will send up thither for us: Then the Lord will bless us, he will bless the House of Israel, He will bless the House of Aaron, He shall bless them that fear him, both small, and great. The Lord will encrease you more and more, both you, and your Children: Wherefore praise the Lord, O Jerusalem, praise thy God, O Sion, for he maketh peace in thy Borders, and hath blessed thy Children within thee.

Now to God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Ghost, be ascribed, as is most due, all Honour, Power, Praise, Might, Majesty, and Dominion, now, and for Evermore:

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